Episode 5: The Dragon Lady and the Lotus Blossom

Source List

Content note: This episode discusses racism, the sexualization of Asian women, suicide in fiction, and the 2021 Atlanta spa shootings.

Films and television

- The Toll of the Sea (1922), starring Anna May Wong as Lotus Flower.
- Daughter of the Dragon (1931), starring Anna May Wong as Fu Manchu's daughter.
- The Mask of Fu Manchu (1932), with Myrna Loy as Fu Manchu's daughter, in yellowface.
- Sayonara (1957), with Miyoshi Umeki in her Oscar-winning role.
- The World of Suzie Wong (1960), starring Nancy Kwan.
- Flower Drum Song (1961).
- The Joy Luck Club (1993), directed by Wayne Wang, co-written and co-produced by Amy Tan.
- Ally McBeal (1997–2002), with Lucy Liu as Ling Woo.
- Kill Bill: Volume 1 (2003).
- Memoirs of a Geisha (2005).
- Ghost in the Shell (2017).
- Killing Eve (2018–2022), starring Sandra Oh as Eve Polastri.
- Crazy Rich Asians (2018), directed by Jon M. Chu, co-written by Adele Lim, from Kevin Kwan's novel.
- Everything Everywhere All at Once (2022), starring Michelle Yeoh.

Opera and musical theater

- Giacomo Puccini, Madama Butterfly (1904).
- Miss Saigon (1989), original London production, with Lea Salonga as Kim.

Books, essays, and articles

- Renee Tajima, "Lotus Blossoms Don't Bleed: Images of Asian Women" (1989). In Making Waves: An Anthology of Writings by and About Asian American Women (Beacon Press).
- Frank Chin and Jeffery Paul Chan, "Racist Love" (1972). In Seeing Through Shuck.
- Lucy Liu, op-ed in The Washington Post (2021).

- Diep Tran, "I Am Miss Saigon, and I Hate It," American Theatre (2017).
- Mineko Iwasaki, Geisha, A Life (2002).
- Nancy Kwan, The World of Nancy Kwan.
- Celine Parreñas Shimizu, The Hypersexuality of Race (2007).
- Leslie Bow, Racist Love: Asian Abstraction and the Pleasures of Fantasy (2022).
- Heather Stur, Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era (2011).
- Pierre Loti, Madame Chrysanthème (1887).
- John Luther Long, "Madame Butterfly" (1898).
- New-York Historical Society, "Afong Moy," Women & the American Story. The 1834 arrival and exhibition of the first Chinese woman known to come to the United States.
- Milton Caniff, Terry and the Pirates (comic strip, 1934–), which introduced the Dragon Lady. Billy Ireland Cartoon Library, Ohio State University.

Research

- Nancy Wang Yuen, Stacy L. Smith, Katherine Pieper, Marc Choueiti, Kevin Yao and Dana Dinh. The Prevalence and Portrayal of Asian and Pacific Islanders across 1,300 Popular Films. USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, May 2021.
- Shoba Rajgopal (2010), "The Daughter of Fu Manchu." How Fu Manchu's daughter keeps coming back in modern TV and film.
- Brian Keum and colleagues (2018), Gendered Racial Microaggressions Scale for Asian American Women. 564 women, four patterns (assumed submissiveness, fetishism, media invalidation, "you all look alike"), and a link to depressive symptoms.
- Robin Zheng (2016), "Why Yellow Fever Isn't Flattering." Why a racial "type" isn't a compliment.
- Thomas Le and Lydia HaRim Ahn (2024), Sex Roles. Internalized racism and Asian American women's dating preferences.
- Maria Cecilia Hwang and Rhacel Salazar Parreñas (2021), Gender & Society. Traces the "villainous temptress" image to American military involvement in Asia.
- Jennifer Berdahl and Ji-A Min (2012). East Asian coworkers described as dominant were liked less than those who weren't, and less than white coworkers who were.
- Amy Cuddy, Susan Fiske, and Peter Glick (2007), the BIAS Map. Why envied groups get tolerated in good times and targeted in bad ones.
- Hilary Bergsieker and colleagues (2012). The fourth round of the Princeton stereotype studies, covering 70 years.
- FBI Uniform Crime Reporting. Hate Crime Statistics, 2019, Table 1, and Supplemental Hate Crime Statistics, 2021 (March 2023), Table 1C.

Historical and cultural context

- William Petersen. “Success Story, Japanese-American Style.” The New York Times Magazine, January 9, 1966. Contemporary artifact in the history of the model-minority stereotype.

- David Morley and Kevin Robins. Spaces of Identity. Routledge, 1995.
- Kumiko Nemoto. “Intimacy, Desire, and the Construction of Self in Relationships between Asian American Women and White American Men.” Journal of Asian American Studies 9, no. 1 (2006): 27–54.

Support resources

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (United States and territories). Call 988, text 988, or use the online chat.
- Stop AAPI Hate. Reporting and support resources.